

Message Text

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12

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 IO-12 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-14

USIA-12 NIC-01 EB-11 TRSE-00 OMB-01 AID-20 RSR-01

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R 270805 Z MAR 73

FM USINT BAGHDAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 233

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

USINT CAIRO

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E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: PFOR, PBOR, KU, IZ

SUBJ: IRAQ- KUWAIT BORDER CLASH

REF: BAGHDAD 138

1. IRAQI MEDIA HAVE CONTINUED NEWS BLACKOUT ON BORDER CLASH WITH KUWAIT WITH EXCEPTION OF EDITORIALS IN OFFICIAL PARTY PAPER ATH- THAWRA MAR 23 AND 27. MEDIA HAVE COVERED MOVEMENTS OF MEDIATORS BUT WITHOUT REFERRING TO PURPOSE OF THEIR TRAVELS, NO MENTION OF ARAB LEAGUE SEC GEN RIAD' S STATEMENT THAT HIS MEDIATION EFFORT HAD SUCCEEDED.

2. ATH- THAWRA EDITORIAL MAR 23 SAID KUWAIT HAD EXAGGERATED IMPORTANCE OF INCIDENT AND IMPERIALISTIC AND REACTIONARY ELEMENTS SAYING IRAQ WAS AGGRESSOR IN ORDER TO PATCH UP REACTIONARY ALLIANCE IN GULF TO WHICH KUWAIT COULD BE DRAWN. FACTS ARE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THAT FRONTIER NOT YET DEMARCATED AND IRAQ AND KUWAIT CONTINUING TO WORK TOWARD FINAL BORDER AGREEMENT. EDITORIAL IN ATH- THAWRA MAR 27 CHARGED THAT KUWAIT PLANNED INCIDENT IN ORDER TO EXPLOIT IT IN COOPERATION WITH ARAB REACTIONARIES AGAINST IRAQ. EDITORIAL ATTRIBUTED KUWAIT CONTRIVED BEHAVIOR TO REGIME' S CONCERN OVER GROWING INTERNAL OPPOSITION AND DESIRE TO PLEASE U. S. AND SAUDI ARABIA. INCIDENT THEREFORE RELATED TO REACTIONARY PACT ESTABLISHED BY SAUDI ARABIA, JORDAN AND IRAN UNDER DIRECTION OF U. S. WHICH IS DIRECTED AGAINST IRAQ AND PALESTINIAN LIBERATION MOVEMENT.

3. INDIAN MILITARY ATTACHE, WHO IS ONE OF FEW DIPLOMATS TO HAVE VISITED UMM QASR, ATTRIBUTES IRAQI AGGRESSIVENESS IN BORDER AREA TO ITS DESIRE TO SECURE APPROACHES TO UMM QASR WHICH IT IS DEVELOPING AS MILITARY PORT THAT WILL BY- PASS SHATT AL- ARAB. HE SAID RAILWAY LINE ALREADY CONSTRUCTED AND NOW IRAQIS WANT TO SECURE STRIP OF COAST. IT ALSO BELIEVED THAT IRAQ TRIED TO PURCHASE OR LEASE SMALL ISLAND AND KUWAIT REFUSED TO SELL.

4. ON MAR 26 USINT RECEIVED SERIES OF QUOTES FROM NEWSPAPERS IN OTHER ARAB COUNTRIES GIVING KUWAITI VERSION OF ATTACK AND STRONGLY CRITICAL OF IRAQ. ALTHOUGH UNMARKED, THESE WERE PRESUMABLY SENT TO ALL DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS FROM KUWAITI EMBASSY.

5. FRENCH CHARGE THINKS IRAQIS MAY HAVE BLUNDERED BY THEIR ATTACK ON BORDER POSTS SINCE KUWAIT MAY NOW HAVE BACKING OF MOSOMARAB SLETES FOR DEMARCATING FRONTIER, WHEREAS PREVIOUSLY IT WAS BILATERAL MATTER WITH IRAQIS IN STRONGER POSITION.
LOWRIE

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